

Our commitment is to make relevant facts available for you, policy makers, tobacco regulators and program designers in the belief that the greater the knowledge about these new products and how they are being marketed, the more appropriate and effective policy and programs will be. We do not see the New Product Watch as a place for policy advocacy. We expect that some participants will be in favor of tobacco harm reduction strategies and others will not. We see the effectiveness of either approach to be an empirical question.

Lois Biener

A map of the United States where states are color-coded: orange for participating states and gray for non-participating states. The participating states (orange) include WA, OR, ID, MT, ND, MN, WI, MI, NY, VT, NH, ME, MA, RI, CT, NJ, DE, MD, VA, WV, KY, IN, IL, IA, MO, KS, NE, SD, WY, UT, CO, NM, AZ, CA, NV, AK, HI, TX, OK, AR, LA, MS, AL, GA, SC, NC, TN, and FL. The non-participating states (gray) include MT, ND, MN, WI, MI, NY, VT, NH, ME, MA, RI, CT, NJ, DE, MD, VA, WV, KY, IN, IL, IA, MO, KS, NE, SD, WY, UT, CO, NM, AZ, CA, NV, AK, HI, TX, OK, AR, LA, MS, AL, GA, SC, NC, TN, and FL. A legend at the bottom right shows an orange square next to the text 'Participating States'.

Results: State contacts' assessment

Goals

We asked you to rate the importance of the following goals:

- Early detection of new tobacco products and marketing strategies.
- Obtaining information to support policy initiatives
- Obtaining information on new product toxicity
- Monitoring marketing activities in bars and clubs

Over 90% of the respondents indicated that all those goals were either “very important” or “somewhat important” with support for policy initiatives being the most important (83% said “very important”).

Additional needs

Many of you commented on additional needs that seemed related to this work. These are great ideas and we hope to be able to address at least some of them:

- Provide information on how the new FDA regulations relate to the new products we'll be monitoring.
- Apply monitoring efforts to assess compliance with existing regulations and agreements (e.g. Smokeless Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement).
- Obtain information about how social networking sites, email, YouTube, etc. may be in use by tobacco companies to reach youth.
- Use the New Product Watch to engage local grantees and community partners in meaningful work to support tobacco control efforts.

...The project will keep our community coalitions informed and vigilant.

...We have so far to go in delivering basic information. Being pro-active is something to work towards.

...being able to systematically track new products and their marketing would be an invaluable (aid) to our policy efforts.

Where have new products been seen?



We asked you to report on a series of new tobacco products, saying which, to the best of your knowledge, are being marketed in your state. At this stage, because a fair number indicated that they were really not sure, we are providing here a summary of your impressions rather than details about products seen by state. **Camel Snus**, not surprisingly, was reportedly for sale in

69% of the states reporting. R.J. Reynolds announced that the product was going national in 2009, and it may well be available everywhere.

Camel Dissolvables have reportedly been marketed in 8 of the 35 states responding even though RJ Reynolds indicated they'd only be available in Portland, OR, Columbus, OH and Indianapolis. Ariva and Stonewall were mentioned in 3 or 4 states.

Marlboro Snus, according to the website (www.marlborosnus.com) , is available only in Texas, Indiana and Arizona. However, according to your reports, it is also being marketed in nine other states. This is a surprise that we will want to follow up upon!

Other snus brands were rarely seen. Grand Prix and Tourney Snus, (made by the Liggett Group) were mentioned by 3 and 2 state respondents respectively and Triumph Snus (Lorillard's

product) by two. One person mentioned General Snus, the popular Swedish brand available by mail.

e-Cigarettes are apparently being marketed in many states, and were reported by 24 of the 35 (69%) states responding. They are showing up in shopping malls and on the internet.

What else? Several people mentioned NicoGel, a nicotine-containing product rubbed on the skin.

...I'm not aware of what specific brands of snus are available.

...Someone told me there's a marijuana-flavored tobacco product on sale!

Implications

- A variety of new tobacco products are being marketed around the country.
- Many state program representatives are unsure what new products are available in their state.
- Some products may be available outside of the publically designated test markets.

How will NPW work with you?

All states indicated that they had local community partners. That's great because they will hopefully be the source of observers you can nominate to be eyes and ears around your state. Most of you indicated that you were willing to ask local partners to be monitors, but 20% were undecided. That makes sense since it wasn't totally clear what you'd be asking people to do, and many programs are tight on finances so paying for new projects could be out of the question. What we intend to do is to provide opportunities for monitoring that vary in intensity from a minimum to a maximum. We will provide instructions, samples, training and materials for carrying out these activities.

Choose observers' level of commitment (or let them choose)

Minimum	Respond to bi-monthly online questionnaire regarding products seen in a few local stores. Take digital pictures of advertising and upload them on the website. Once or twice a year, purchase specified products and mail to our lab for constituent analysis. (Costs for purchases and mailings will be reimbursed.)
Moderate	In addition, poll colleagues for news of product sales and promotional activities at local colleges or entertainment venues.
Maximum	Sign up 2 to 6 people in each location to do a survey of a representative sample of tobacco sellers and report on product availability, demand, point of purchase marketing strategies, and price.

Other options. Depending on your interest and resources, we can periodically work with groups to provide materials and training to do other types of surveillance.

- Add a standard set of questions to state or community youth surveys, and if needed, get our help with analysis.
- Report on bar/club/fraternity house promotional events for new tobacco products.
- Survey of local newspapers for advertising of new products.
- Monitor manufacturers' websites for promotional strategies.

When will you get the results?

Results will be posted on the New Product Watch website within two months of data collection. Data will be available by state and for all participants as a group. The timeliness of this information is a vital aspect of its value. The website will also have a discussion forum, so all participants can post messages about their observations or questions and see immediately what is being seen and done in their state and elsewhere. All postings will be tagged by observer name and state. It will be possible to start a discussion topic for your own state if desired. The website is currently under construction and should be up and running by the end of October, 2009.

Next steps

Nominate your observers. Please use the form attached to the email to provide contact information for the people you are identifying as local observers. It would probably be a good idea to check with them about willingness ahead of time.

Things to keep in mind when nominating observers:

- We'd like one person to be the "designated reporter" for a specific geographic area (city, county, etc.) The more defined regions in your state, the better.
- The best observers are people who are truly interested in new tobacco products. They are already on the lookout and more willing to visit at least a few local convenience stores.
- People who know people. Ideally observers would talk to others (co-workers, a network of colleagues, etc.) who can help them stay up-to-date about new tobacco promotions.

About New Product Watch

New Product Watch is a web-based national monitoring network made up of state tobacco program staff and their community partners. The project will provide tools for monitors to report local observations regarding the availability and marketing of new oral tobacco and nicotine products that will be posted on line for members around the country to see and utilize. Monitors will also collect product samples for analysis of chemical constituents and packaging. Our aim is to obtain more comprehensive and timely information about new products than is currently available.

Potential Value for Public Health Professionals

- Rapid identification of product introductions and point-of sale marketing
- Tracking of product constituents over time and geographic area and dissemination of results.
- Facilitate communication between researchers and state tobacco control agencies.
- Develop research targeted to specific products as they are introduced, focused on the areas and populations that are most likely to be impacted.

About the funders and staff.

The New Product Watch is funded by the National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute through the Tobacco Surveillance, Epidemiology and Evaluation Network (TSEEN) and the Tobacco Harm Reduction Network (THRN).

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Got questions?

Send them to us at newproductwatch@umb.edu